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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0748  
INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE  
RUEAHND/CDR JTF-BRAVO IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TEGUCIGALPA 000967

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/24/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CASC](#) [MARR](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: TFH01: HONDURAS COUP SITREP #62 09/24/2009 AS OF  
16:00 LOCAL (18:00 EDT)

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 963 AND OTHERS

Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens, reasons 1.4 (b and d)

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Diplomatic Process  
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¶1. (U) The Executive Director of the Center for the Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture (CPTRT), a Honduran human rights NGO, sent a letter on September 22 to the President of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly requesting that the UN send a medical and human rights mission to Honduras.

¶2. (SBU) The de facto regime Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a diplomatic note to the OAS Secretary General accepting an alleged proposal for former President Jimmy Carter, Costa Rican President Oscar Arias and Panamanian Vice-President Juan Carlos Varela to come to Honduras within the next couple of days and discuss the current situation. (Note: We understand that no such proposal exists. End Note.) Honduran National Radio reported that de facto President Micheletti expressed to President Carter that he is willing to step aside if President Zelaya commits to the November 29 electoral process, desists in his demand to be reinstated as President and submits to the laws and the Constitution of Honduras. (Note: This has been Micheletti's stated position for many weeks. End note)

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Domestic Political Situation  
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¶3. (U) Post confirmed that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) made an official request to enter Honduras to document alleged human rights violations since September 21. The de facto government has not yet responded to this request.

¶4. (C) Four of the five presidential candidates who met earlier this month with President Arias in Costa Rica and agreed to the San Jose framework were scheduled to meet separately today, September 24, with both de facto President Micheletti and President Zelaya. In a conversation with the Ambassador on September 23, the candidates expressed their desire to see a negotiated solution under the San Jose

framework.

¶5. (SBU) The Ambassador met on September 24 with a group of anti-coup Liberal Party congressional candidates. They expressed concern about the security of President Zelaya and his family. They told the Ambassador that unless President Zelaya is restored to power this week, they do not believe the environment in the country is propitious to hold elections as scheduled on November 29. The Ambassador told them that the United States has stressed the importance of respecting the inviolability of the Embassy of Brazil. He said he believes a negotiated solution is the appropriate way forward and that President Arias' proposed San Jose Accord is a good one. The Ambassador stated that the United States supports the proposed mission by the Organization of American States (OAS) to promote dialogue.

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Economic Situation  
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¶6. (SBU) Following up on reports on the effects of the temporary lifting of the curfew September 23, Embosffs visited supermarkets near the Embassy today to find shelves well-stocked and little sign of the mob scenes from the previous day. Atypical demand brought on by the curfew reprieve did exhaust resources at some gas stations. According to an ExxonMobil contact, reports of dry gas stations were limited and occurred primarily in rural areas where distribution is an issue even under normal political conditions. A representative from Shell Honduras added that combustible stocks in the country should suffice for 15 to 20

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days in the event of border or port closures. The de facto Secretary of Industry and Commerce publicly assured that there is ample supply of fuel.

¶7. (SBU) Management from three major supermarket chains said that stores were well supplied and distributors were also able make deliveries during the break in the curfew. Small family-run shops (called pulperias) have had mixed results. Some report increased business during the curfew because they stayed open when larger stores closed while other shop owners who depend on deliveries or traveling salespeople have found the curfew more disruptive. Although there were no reports of widespread shortages at major supermarkets or significant violence related to these shopping sprees, retailers have security concerns. During the early morning hours of September 23, looters ransacked a La Colonia supermarket, an Elektra appliance store, a Despensa Familiar supermarket (a Wal-Mart company), a branch of Banco Azteca, and several ATM machines in Tegucigalpa.

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Civil Unrest and Security Environment  
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¶8. (U) At approximately 1145 local (1345 EDT) a group of over 5,000 pro-Micheletti demonstrators marched from the United Nations Building to the U.S. Embassy. The demonstrators departed at 1245 local and moved on to protest at Radio Globo. At noon local (1400 EDT), a group of over 1,000 anti-coup protestors clashed with police near the National Autonomous University (UNAH). The protestors attempted to spread out from UNAH to create sporadic roadblocks, then dispersed by mid-afternoon.

¶9. (SBU) There was a rumor on September 23 among Honduran political leaders that leftist demonstrators in neighboring countries had blocked Honduras' borders (reftel). Embassies Managua and Guatemala advised on September 24 that they had no evidence that there were protestors blocking the borders.

¶10. (SBU) Police report they have information to believe pro-Zelaya movement leaders are changing their tactic away

from centralized, concentrated marches toward small, "lightning" protests and roadblocks, consistent with the protests the night of September 22 in neighborhoods around Tegucigalpa. Police in San Pedro Sula have observed a similar approach, though less prone to violence or vandalism.

¶11. (U) Honduran National Police HNP) reported 382 curfew related detentions on September 23. Police report all persons were released after curfew was lifted at 0600 local (0800 EDT) on September 24, except those with outstanding warrants.

¶12. (U) HNP reported nine protests/roadblocks around Tegucigalpa on September 23. A group of protestors attempted to take over and burn the police post in the San Francisco neighborhood. They were repelled by police and 20 were arrested. Police also reported thwarting a plan to loot a government BANASUPRO basic foodstuff store.

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Consular/ACS  
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¶13. (U) The Consular Section issued a revised warden message the afternoon of September 23. The Consular Section continues to regularly update ACS information on the Embassy website. Consular also reports that the volume of ACS calls has been moderate to low all week.

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Infrastructure and Communications  
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¶14. (U) All airports were open for international flights today, September 24, but airports did not expect international arrivals to begin until tomorrow, September 25 because airlines were not yet ready to resume their

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flights.

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Media Update  
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¶15. (SBU) Pro-Zelaya radio station Radio Globo reported the morning of September 24 that buses from the American School (attended by several Embassy family children, as well as President Zelaya's granddaughter) and the Instituto San Miguel (no Embassy families) were being used to transport pro-Micheletti forces to demonstration sites. The Consul General called the station's director, David Romero, to object in the strongest terms to this reporting, noting that such stories put children, and specifically Embassy children, in danger, especially given the current atmosphere. Romero apologized for the mistake, and said he had been contacted by both schools with a similar message and that Radio Globo would be broadcasting a retraction throughout the day.

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Embassy Operations  
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¶16. (U) The Embassy is open today, September 24. In anticipation of a curfew, the Embassy employed an early release policy for FSN employees beginning at 4 pm today, September 24. The Embassy will be open on September 25, depending on curfew status. (Note official announcements have been made minutes before imposing or lifting curfews since September 21. End note)

¶17. (SBU) All Mission employees and dependents have been instructed to remain within Tegucigalpa through the weekend of September 26-27. No non-essential travel, either personal or official, is authorized until further notice. All TDY travel into Honduras has been suspended for the remainder of

the week.  
LLORENS